

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

Counterterrorism Division/Counterterrorism Analysis Section

15 November 2013

(U//~~FOUO~~) Recent Upsurge in Animal Rights Extremist Activity in the West and Midwest May Encourage Future Criminal Actions

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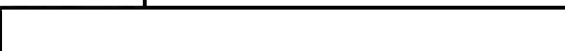
(U//~~LES~~) The FBI assesses [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]^a based on multiple FBI investigations and open source reporting that a



Further, rhetoric in claims of responsibility for such criminal acts supports and encourages future actions. [REDACTED]



(U//~~LES~~) The FBI assesses animal rights extremists [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



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(U) Source Summary Statement

(U//~~FOUO~~) Information in this bulletin is derived from multiple FBI investigations and open source reporting from 27 May to 4 September 2013. The FBI considers the open source reporting provided as evidence used in this bulletin to be reliable, as this information includes reports of criminal activity which have been confirmed or reported to law enforcement. In many instances, law enforcement assessment of the property damage is similar to the description provided by the perpetrators in the posted communiqués. Open source citations are provided where possible for external verification. [REDACTED]



Reporting of additional criminal activity from state and local law enforcement would assist in assessing the current threat posed by animal rights extremists. [REDACTED]



^a (U) See the Appendix for confidence level definitions.

^b (U) Although animal releases often involve property damage or vandalism, for the purpose of this IB *vandalism* refers to reported incidents of property damage not involving an animal release.

^c (U) The Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, Title 18 USC § 43, defines an animal enterprise as a commercial or academic enterprise that uses or sells animals or animal products for profit, food, or fiber production, agriculture, education, research, or testing; a zoo, aquarium, animal shelter, pet store, breeder, furrier, circus, or rodeo, or other lawful competitive animal event; or any fair or similar event intended to advance agricultural arts and sciences.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Animal Enterprises Targeted with Animal Releases and Acts of Vandalism

(U//~~LES~~) From late May to early September 2013, animal rights extremists claimed responsibility for more than 30 animal releases and acts of vandalism in California, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Oregon, and Wisconsin.¹ Although many of the incidents resulted in only minor property damage or limited losses, they still violate federal law prescribing the targeting of animal enterprises. Entities targeted included farms and such businesses as fur stores, restaurants, butcher shops, and meat and seafood distributors. Law enforcement confirmed the occurrence of a majority of the incidents and reported two additional animal releases.

- (U//~~LES~~) Animal rights extremists claimed responsibility for “liberating”^d game birds, mink, cows, and a bobcat in July and August 2013, for which law enforcement has confirmed incidents in California, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Montana, and Oregon.
- (U//~~LES~~) Animal right extremists also claimed responsibility for vandalizing animal-related businesses in California, Illinois, Minnesota, Oregon, residential property in Wisconsin, and property at the state fair in Iowa.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Mink Farm Raids Reported in Idaho, Illinois, and Iowa

(U//~~FOUO~~) Law enforcement reported three mink releases, one each in Idaho, Illinois, and Iowa, during late July and August 2013. Animal rights extremists claimed responsibility for the first farm raid in July 2013, and the other two raids in August 2013 were later publicized on Web sites associated with animal rights extremism.^{2, 3}

UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~**(U) Upsurge in Criminal Actions after Period of Reported Low Activity**

(U//~~LES~~) This recent surge in criminal activity occurred after a noticeable decrease in the number of reported animal rights-related criminal incidents in the last few years. The number of reported animal rights-related criminal incidents in recent years is significantly lower in comparison to the number collected during the late-2000s. This trend is likely due to continued federal, state, and local law enforcement successes against the extremist movement which have served as a deterrent to some criminal activity. In 2011 and 2012, less than 30 property crimes such as arson, attempted arson, vandalism and animal thefts were reported for the 24-month period compared to more than 30 vandalisms and animal thefts during May through early September 2013.⁴

⁴(U//~~LES~~) Source: (U//~~LES~~) FBI Case Information, Based on criminal incidents reported to the FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section.

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^d (U//~~FOUO~~) Animal rights extremists usually refer to the theft or release of animals as “liberations” as the action frees the animals from perceived captivity.



- (U) On 30 July 2013, extremists adhering to an animal rights ideology claimed responsibility for “liberating” several thousand mink on a farm in Burley, Idaho. The perpetrators cut the perimeter fencing to gain access and set up surveillance to watch for security as they released more than 2000 mink, according to the anonymously posted communiqué to a publically accessible Web site of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism. According to the communiqué and law enforcement investigation, in addition to releasing the mink, the perpetrators destroyed the breeding records so the farmer cannot properly identify the genetic lines.^{5, 6}
- (U//~~FOUO~~) Local authorities responded to the 14 August 2013 release of approximately 2000 mink from a farm in Morris, Illinois, and to the 30 August release of several hundred mink from a farm in Keota, Iowa, according to information provided to the FBI.^{7, 8} At the Illinois farm, the perpetrators spray painted “LIBERATION IS LOVE” on the side of a barn and spilled a caustic substance over two trucks parked in the vicinity of the farm. The owner also discovered the breeding cards which were attached to the cages had been removed and destroyed. Losses are estimated at over \$120,000.⁹

⁹ (U//~~FOUO~~) 

- (U//~~LES~~) The farms recently targeted are listed in the latest edition of *The Final Nail*, a document self-described as a comprehensive guide to destroying the fur industry.¹⁰ [REDACTED]

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(U//~~FOUO~~) Game Bird Releases in California and Oregon

(U//~~FOUO~~) Animal rights extremist(s) claimed responsibility for releasing game birds in California and Oregon,^f in separate incidents during July and August 2013. Law enforcement confirmed the incidents and the claims of responsibility cited the actions required no specialized skills and limited financial resources. The FBI assesses [REDACTED]

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as according to Fish and Wildlife government Web sites, pheasant hunting season opened in mid-August 2013 in California and in early September 2013 in Oregon.^{13, 14}

- (U) On 16 August 2013, animal rights extremist(s) claimed responsibility for releasing three ringneck pheasants, one white pheasant, and one mountain quail from an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife facility near Corvallis, Oregon, on the night of 15 August 2013. The perpetrator(s) emphasized no specialized skills were necessary, just “a little determination and a \$15 pair of bolt cutters to make animal liberation a reality,” according to an anonymously posted claim on behalf of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)^g to a publically accessible Web site of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism.¹⁵
- (U//~~FOUO~~) On 27 July 2013, animal rights extremist(s) claimed responsibility on behalf of the ALF for having used wire cutters to open pens at a pheasant farm in Riverside, California, on the night of 22 July in a communiqué posted to a publically accessible Web site of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism.^{16, 17}

(U//~~FOUO~~) Property Vandalized in California, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Oregon, and Wisconsin

(U//~~LES~~) Law enforcement investigations confirmed property crimes in six states with the majority of the incidents occurring in California and Oregon. Extremists likely consider property crimes easy to commit, with low-risk of capture and minimal penalties should those responsible be arrested. [REDACTED] a localized animal rights extremist presence and potential for additional criminal activity.

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^f (U//~~FOUO~~) According to law enforcement reporting, animal rights extremists targeted pheasant farms in nearby Scio and Canby, Oregon in 2012. (Sources: (U) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED and (U) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED.)

^g (U//~~FOUO~~) The ALF is not a group in the traditional sense. It is a moniker used by individuals adhering to an animal rights ideology when claiming criminal actions. According to the ALF guidelines, an individual can claim to be a member of the ALF by committing an action on behalf of the ideology.

- (U) In separate incidents, in mid-July and mid-August 2013, animal rights extremist(s) using the moniker “The Frogs” claimed responsibility on publically available Web sites of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism for gluing locks at two different butcher shops in Portland, Oregon. The claims of responsibility respectively cited inspiration “by the spike in underground animal liberation activity” and “by all the creative destruction taking place as of late by anarchists and animal liberationists in Portland.”^{18, 19}

- (U//~~FOUO~~) During the late evening/early morning hours of 28 to 29 July 2013, unknown subject(s) used red spray paint to write graffiti on the glass doors and patio of a restaurant in Costa Mesa, California, including the phrase “FREE THE ANIMALS.”²⁰ According to an anonymously posted communiqué dated 5 August 2013 to a publically available Web site of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism, the action was conducted on behalf of the ALF and included the following statements:

(U) “Inspired by the recent actions in Portland and San Diego ... This action was simple and took no more than a few minutes ... Actions like these and those that are on the rise in North America can be taken by anyone with a little bit of planning and a few minutes of your night. This action was taken in solidarity with all animal liberation and anarchist prisoners around the world. ALF.”²¹

- (U//~~FOUO~~) On 21 July 2013, a communiqué posted to a publically available Web site of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism attributed three vandalisms in the San Diego, California area to the ALF and stated that their act was in vain unless “it inspires others to liberate and sabotage.”²² According to law enforcement reporting, the perpetrator(s) spray painted the words “MURDER” and “KILLER” in red on the front of the fur store and spread glass etchant on the panel windows. Local authorities reported similar graffiti and property damage at the former and current owners’ residences.²³

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(U) Animal Rights Extremist(s) Vandalize Display at Iowa State Fair



(U) On 12 August, animal rights extremist(s) using the moniker “Iowans for Animal Liberation” claimed responsibility for “destroying the iconic Iowa State Fair ‘Butter Cow’ on the night of August 10th.” According to the claim, the perpetrator(s) doused the sculpture with red paint and spray painted “Freedom for all” in red on the glass in front of the display. A photograph of the vandalism accompanied the communiqué posted to a Web site of undetermined reliability associated with animal rights extremism.

(U) Source: (U) Internet site; BITE BACK Magazine; “Butter Cow Sculpture Doused in Red Paint”; 12 August 2013; http://www.directaction.info/news_aug12_13.htm; accessed on 9 September 2013; Source is a publically available Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as a news magazine about the radical animal rights movement worldwide.

(U) Outlook and Implications

(U//~~LES~~) The FBI assesses [redacted] based on multiple FBI investigations and open source reporting animal rights extremists [redacted]

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[redacted]

(U//~~LES~~) [redacted]

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(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI further assesses [redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) Intelligence Collection Requirements Addressed in Paper/NIPF Requirements

(U//~~FOUO~~) **Intelligence Collection Requirements Addressed in Paper:** This intelligence bulletin addresses requirements contained in the FBI National Standing Collection Requirements Domestic Terrorism: Animal Rights/Environmental Extremism contained in USA-TERR-CTD-SR-0001-11.IA.1B.

(U) This product has been prepared by the Counterterrorism Analysis Section of the FBI. Comments and queries may be addressed to the Section Chief at [redacted] or via e-mail at [redacted]

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(U) Appendix: FBI Confidence-Level Definitions

(U) FBI assessments are supported by information that varies in scope, quality and sourcing. Consequently, the FBI ascribes high, medium, or low levels of confidence to judgments as follows:

(U) **High confidence** generally indicates that judgments are based on high-quality information from multiple sources or from a single highly reliable source, or that the nature of the issue makes it possible to render a solid judgment.

(U) **Medium confidence** generally means that the information is credibly sourced and plausible, but can be interpreted in various ways, or is not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence.

(U) **Low confidence** generally means that the information's credibility or plausibility is questionable, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or that the FBI has significant concerns or problems with the sources.

(U) Endnotes

¹ (U//~~LES~~) FBI Case information; Based on criminal incidents reported to the FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~.

² (U) Internet site; BITE BACK Magazine; "2000 Mink Released From Cages"; 28 August 2013; http://www.directaction.info/news_aug28_13.htm; accessed on 3 September 2013; Source is a publically available Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as a news magazine about the radical animal rights movement worldwide.

³ (U) Internet site; Animal Liberation Frontline; "Yet another fur farm hit: Over 100 mink freed in Iowa"; 4 September 2013; <http://www.animalliberationfrontline.com/yet-another-fur-farm-hit-over-100-mink-freed-in-iowa>; accessed on 5 September 2013; Source is a publically available Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as providing information about the Animal Liberation Front and animal rights activism.

⁴ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI; Intelligence Bulletin; "(U) [REDACTED] 15 June 2009; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~.

⁵ (U) Internet site; BITE BACK Magazine; "First Fur Farm Raid of the Summer!"; 30 July 2013; http://www.directaction.info/new_july30_13; accessed on 2 August 2013; Source is a publically available Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as a news magazine about the radical animal rights movement worldwide.

⁶ (U) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED.

⁷ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~.

⁸ (U) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED.

⁹ (U) *Op. cit.* endnote 7.

¹⁰ (U) Internet site; The Final Nail #4; "THE FINAL NAIL Destroying the Fur Industry Number Four Summer 2013 Complete Guide to Liberating Fur Farm Prisoners"; 31 May 2013; <https://finalnail.wordpress.com/>; accessed on 19 June 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability which has posted a publically accessible document with no attributed authorship that provides a collection of fur industry addresses, tactical guidance, and past criminal incidents.

¹¹ (U//~~LES~~) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~.

¹² (U) *Op. cit.* endnote 4.

¹³ (U) Internet site; California Department of FISH and WILDLIFE; "Summary of July 2013 – June 2014 Upland and Small Game Hunting Seasons, Limits"; 7 August 2013; <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/regulatoins/upland-summary-13-14.html>; accessed on 5 September 2013; Source is a publically available government Web site for the state of California whose stated mission is to management California's diverse fish, wildlife, plant resources, and habitats.

¹⁴ (U) Internet site; Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; "2013-2014 Oregon Game Bird Regulations"; http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/upland_bird/docs/2013-14_oregon-game_bird_regs.pdf; accessed on 5 September 2013; Source is a publically available government Web site for the state of Oregon whose stated mission is to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife habitats.

¹⁵ (U) Internet site; North American Animal Liberation Press Office; "ALF Releases Captive Pheasants and Quail in Oregon"; 16 August 2013; <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2013/08/16/alf-releases-captive-pheasants-and-quail-in-oregon/>; accessed on 13 September 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as taking a proactive stance to communicate the actions, strategies, and philosophy of the animal liberation movement.

¹⁶ (U) Internet site; BITE BACK Magazine; "Farm Raided, Pheasants Given Chance at Freedom"; 27 July 2013; http://www.directaction.info/news_july27_13.htm; accessed on 2 August 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as a news magazine about the radical animal rights movement worldwide.

¹⁷ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI Case Information: UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~.

¹⁸ (U) Internet site; BITE BACK Magazine; "Butcher Shop Locks Glued"; 18 July 2013; http://www.directaction.info/news_july18_13.htm; accessed on 9 September 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as a news magazine about the radical animal rights movement worldwide.

¹⁹ (U) Internet site; North American Animal Liberation Press Office; "Portland, OR Meat Markets Vandalized"; 9 August 2013; <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2013/08/09/portland-or-meat-market-vandalized/>; accessed on 9 September 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as taking a proactive stance to communicate the actions, strategies, and philosophy of the animal liberation movement.

²⁰ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI Case information; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~.

²¹ (U) Internet site; North American Animal Liberation Press Office; "Taco Asylum in Costa Mesa, CA Has Locks Glued, Gets Paint Job"; 5 August 2013; 28 July 2013;
<https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2013/08/05/taco-asylum-in-costa-mesa-ca-has-locks-glued-gets-paint-job/>; accessed on 17 September 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as taking a proactive stance to communicate the actions, strategies, and philosophy of the animal liberation movement.

²² (U) Internet site; North American Animal Liberation Press Office; "San Diego Fur Shop, Owner, Manager's Residences Sabotaged by ALF"; 21 July 2013; 16 July 2013;
<https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2013/07/21/san-diego-fur-shop-owner-managers-residences-sabotaged-by-alf/>; accessed on 13 September 2013; Source is a Web site of undetermined reliability and self-described as taking a proactive stance to communicate the actions, strategies, and philosophy of the animal liberation movement.

²³ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI Case Information; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~.

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